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EXCISE

Subject: [redacted]

Participants: [redacted] Mario Luciolli, Counselor, Italian Embassy
Homer M. Byington, Jr. - WE
William B. Knight - WE

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I mentioned the report we had received from Rome of Italian concern that Yugoslavia might be considering some military intervention in Albania and said that we had no information at all which would tend to confirm these reports. I said that as he knew our policy towards Albania, just as Italy's, continued to be in favor of maintenance of Albanian independence.

Dr. Luciolli said he thought the Foreign Office concern stemmed from a series of reports from Radio Belgrade playing up in a most dramatic fashion reports of unrest and upheaval in Albania. In attempting to explain to itself these reports, the Foreign Office had developed two hypotheses: (1) that the Yugoslavs wished to play up the situation to increase the interest in Tito's visit to London or, (2) that the Yugoslavs were laying the public relations foundation for unilateral intervention in Albania.

Dr. Luciolli said he had discussed this with Mr. Walworth Barbour in EE and that Mr. Barbour had made the same points I had and had agreed that any Yugoslav move in Albania would create a dangerous situation not only with Italy but with the iron curtain countries and the Soviet Union as well. Dr. Luciolli said he understood that we had not made up our minds on any action we might take on the basis of these reports as yet; he added however that in view of the extreme gravity of the situation which would result from any such Yugoslav move, some informal indication to the Yugoslav Government of our point of view might help prevent unilateral and possibly unexpected Yugoslav action.

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Homer M. Byington, Jr.

EUR:WE:WKnight:mct
3-18-53

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